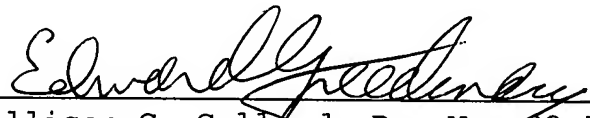


**REMARKS**

By this Preliminary Amendment, the application has been amended to conform with U.S. practice, the cross-reference to related applications has been inserted on page 1, and the claims have been amended to delete the multiple dependencies. No new matter has been introduced. Entry of this amendment is respectfully requested.

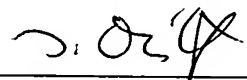
Respectfully submitted,  
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Express Mail No. **EV 590259069 US**  
Date of Deposit - **December 23, 2004**

I hereby certify that this paper or fee is being deposited with the United States Postal Service "Express Mail Post Office to Addressee" service under 37 C.F.R. § 1.10, on the date indicated above, and is addressed to Commissioner of Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.

  
~~Maria Guastella~~  
